India for new alliances with ASEAN and other countries

495. DR. VIJAY MALLYA:
SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of the failure of the WTO Minsiterial Conference at Cancun and the threat issued by the US of bypassing WTO for bilateral trading arrangements, Government are contemplating to forge new alliances with ASEAN and other countries such as China, South Korea, Japan etc.;

(b) if so, whether any bilateral alliances are being worked out; and

(c) the details of steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) India's engagements for bilateral alliances are consistent with our trading interests and is an on going process of our trade policy, started much before the Cancun Conference. The failure or otherwise of WTO Ministerial Conference does not shape our attitude to bilateral alliances.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Transit business facility through Bangladesh

496. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are planning for providing transit business facility through Bangladesh and whether Bangladesh Government have been contacted on this issue;

(b) if so, the progress made so for; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) to (c) In terms of Article VIII of the Trade Agreement between India and Bangladesh, the two Governments have agreed to make mutually beneficial arrangements for the use of their waterways, railways and roadways for commerce